

Message Text

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USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 2737

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MORG, KU

SUBJECT: DEFENSE MINISTER REQUESTS U.S. MILITARY EVALUATION
OF KUWAIT ARMED FORCES

1. I MET WITH DEFENSE MINISTER SHAIKH SALEM SABAH AL-SALEM
MAY 6 AT HIS REQUEST TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE USG ASSISTANCE
IN EVALUATION OF THE KUWAIT MILITARY ORGANIZATION.

2. SHAIKH SALEM ASKED ME TO INQUIRE INTO THE POSSIBILITY
IN BRINGING A U.S. MILITARY TEAM TO KUWAIT TO EVALUATE THE
ORGANIZATION OF THE KUWAIT ARMED FORCES (KAF). BEING NEW
ON THE JOB, IT SEEMED CLEAR THAT THE DEFENSE MINISTER WAS
SEEKING AN OUTSIDE ASSESSMENT OF THE KAF ORGANIZATION AND
PRESUMABLY HOW IT WAS PERFORMING WITHIN THE PRESENT
ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK. MY IMPRESSION IS THAT HE IS
SEEKING ADVICE WITH REGARD TO A MORE EFFICIENT AND
PRACTICAL ORGANIZATION OF THE KAF IN ORDER TO MEET KUWAIT'S
DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS.

3. I RECALLED TO SHAIKH SALEM THAT WE HAD SENT A MILITARY
SURVEY TEAM TO KUWAIT IN 1972 IN ORDER TO DETERMINE WHAT
WERE KUWAIT'S ESSENTIAL DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS. THE SURVEY
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TEAM'S REPORT PROVIDED RECOMMENDATIONS AS TO THE TYPE OF
MILITARY EQUIPMENT, ETC. THAT APPEARED NECESSARY TO MEET
THE GOK'S DEFENSE OBJECTIVES. (SHAIKH SALEM APPARENTLY
WAS UNAWARE OF THIS REPORT AND ACCEPTED BY RECOMMENDATION
THAT HE REVIEW IT.) I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE THAT
THE U.S. DEFENSE DEPARTMENT COULD PROVIDE A QUALIFIED
MILITARY TEAM TO CONDUCT THE EVALUATION HE REQUESTED.

SINCE I WAS RETURNING TO WASHINGTON FOR CONSULTATIONS DURING THE NEXT WEEK, I PROMISED HIM THAT I WOULD RAISE THIS MATTER WITH DOD TO DETERMINE WHETHER THIS WOULD INDEED BE FEASIBLE.

4. SHAIKH SALEM THEN ALSO REQUESTED THAT A STUDY BE MADE OF THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE CIVILIAN AND MILITARY OFFICIALS IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE. I SUGGESTED THAT THIS MIGHT BE MORE DIFFICULT FOR US TO RESPOND TO SINCE DOD ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERTS WERE UNDOUBTEDLY FULLY OCCUPIED WITH THEIR ONGOING WORK AND PROBABLY COULD NOT BE MADE AVAILABLE TO CONDUCT SUCH A STUDY. HOWEVER, I THOUGHT THAT THERE MAY WELL BE A NUMBER OF CONSULTING FIRMS STAFFED BY FORMER SENIOR U.S. MILITARY OFFICERS AND DOD CIVILIAN OFFICIALS WHO WOULD BE RATHER WELL-QUALIFIED TO TAKE ON SUCH AN ASSIGNMENT. I TOLD SHAIKH SALEM THAT I WOULD ALSO CONSULT WITH DOD ON THIS QUESTION AND PASS ON TO HIM ANY RECOMMENDATIONS OR SUGGESTIONS IT MIGHT HAVE.

5. COMMENT: BOTH OF THESE REQUESTS BY THE KUWAIT DEFENSE MINISTER COULD BE DIFFICULT TO MEET. THERE ARE OBVIOUSLY CERTAIN INTERNAL POLITICAL AND FACTIONAL PROBLEMS INVOLVED. HOWEVER, THE MILITARY EVALUATION OF THE KAF ORGANIZATION, IF IT COULD BE UNDERTAKEN, WOULD, I FEEL CERTAIN, BE OF GREAT VALUE TO THE KUWAIT DEFENSE ESTABLISHMENT. DEPENDING ON HOW IT WAS CONDUCTED, IT COULD ALSO SERVE TO PROMOTE CONFIDENTIAL

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CLOSER COOPERATION BETWEEN THE KUWAIT AND U.S. MILITARY. ONE OF THE GOK'S PRINCIPAL PROBLEMS IN CONSTRUCTING A VIABLE DEFENSE FORCE RELATES TO ITS SHORTAGE OF PERSONNEL AND, EQUALLY IMPORTANTLY, TO ITS EMPLOYMENT OF THE LIMITED PERSONEL IT HAS ON HAND. AN IMPROVED ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE COULD POSSIBLY HELP IMPROVE THE GOK'S MILITARY PERSONNEL SITUATION. I WILL WISH TO EXPLORE THIS MATTER IN MORE DETAIL WITH THE DEPT. AND DOD NEXT WEEK WHEN I AM IN WASHINGTON FOR CONSULTATIONS.

MAESTRONE

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